

**Carl D. Perkins  
Career and Technical Education  
Legislative Report  
November, 2016**



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**Submitted by:  
Office of Commissioner of Higher Education  
In consultation with the Office of Public Instruction  
On behalf of Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education**

# **Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Update**

## **Submitted By: Office of Commissioner of Higher Education on Behalf of the Montana Board of Regents**

Montana statute (§§ 20-7-330, MCA) requires that the Montana Board of Regents prepare a biennial report to the legislature on the results of interactions the regents have had with the superintendent of public instruction, teachers, students, labor organizations, businesses, and institutions or agencies involved in vocational and technical education related to Montana's State Plan for Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement. In Board of Regents Policy 272, the responsibility for those interactions and the subsequent report is delegated to the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE). In collaboration with its Partnering Agency, the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI), OCHE is engaged in interactions of this type daily.

This report provides a summary of the Carl D. Perkins grant expenditure highlights in the state of Montana, focusing on the current 2016-2017 grant cycle.

### **I. Background**

The current legislation (Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006) governing federal funding for career and technical education at the secondary and postsecondary level has several priorities:

- Increase opportunities for individuals to keep America competitive
- Develop challenging academic and technical standards and related, challenging integrated academic and career and technical education instruction
- Prepare students for high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations in current or emerging career fields and clusters
- Promote partnerships among education, workforce boards, business and industry, and community organizations
- Provide technical assistance and professional development to teachers/instructors and administrators
- Increase state and local accountability

The Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education is the designated state board to coordinate the development and submission of the state plan for career and technical education as required by the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 (Perkins IV).

The state agencies responsible for career and technical education in Montana are the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) and the Division of Career, Technical, and Adult Education of the Office of Public Instruction (OPI). Given their close coordination of activities, the State Plan and this report refer to the two agencies as the "Partner Agencies."

### **II. Status of Perkins Reauthorization**

In September 2016, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 5587, the Strengthening CTE for the 21st Century Act, by a vote of 405 to 5. Leaders of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee had originally scheduled a markup of their Perkins reauthorization bill; however, as final work on the bill continued, negotiations stalled and the markup has been postponed indefinitely.

Until a Perkins reauthorization bill has been passed, the Montana State Plan for Career and Technical Education, in accordance with the provisions of The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006, stands. There is also no change in leadership structure at this time.

### **III. Updates for Post-Secondary CTE programs and Strengthening Big Sky Pathways**

- This grant year Strengthening Big Sky Pathways awarded \$500,762 in funds (including \$420,560 from FY 2017 Reserve Funds and \$80,202 carryover from FY 2016) via competitive application to nine campuses: Missoula College, Great Falls College, Highlands College, Gallatin College, Flathead Valley Community College, Salish Kootenai College, City College, MSU Northern, and Helena College.
- The primary objective of this grant year's Strengthening Big Sky Pathways is to increase CTE dual enrollment in new or existing Pathways in high schools across the state. Over the past two years Montana has achieved a 5% increase in CTE dual enrollment, and currently 30% of courses taught annually in high schools are CTE content (up from 25% in 2014).
- In October, the State Executive Leadership Team (SELT) met to reorient the direction of career pathways in the state. Led by the Office of Public Instruction, Montana will be adopting statewide pathways, which are more responsive to industry needs, more universally applicable to high schools large and small, and have information in a form more understandable to students and parents.
- Perkins and Strengthening Big Sky Pathways-receiving campuses continue to host high-impact, student centered events such as: MSUN's TekNoXpo, Gallatin College's Manufacturing Day, Helena College's Women in Gear, Great Fall College's Trades Rodeo, Flathead Valley Community College's Night at the Broussard Center.
- Perkins funding has been used to purchase or supplement the cost of major equipment vital for training students on technology current with industry trends for CTE programs such as X-Ray Phantoms and Portable Electric Relativity Control Learning Systems for City College, a Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometer for Flathead Valley Community College, a Redbird TD2 Flight Simulator for Gallatin College, and an Orbital Welder for Helena College.

### **IV. Updates for Secondary CTE Programs**

- Project Share was a piloted set of lessons designed to introduce health information literacy and social determinants of health to high school students enrolled in health science courses. This was piloted in one high school over a six-month period (second semester) to determine how this information impacted student understanding of overall health. Focus groups and evaluations provided further focus for statewide distribution in 2016-2017.
- A full day was dedicated to immersing school counselors in CTE related activities that lead to high wage, high skill, high demand careers in Montana at the Montana School Counselor Association Career Day. Health professionals such as a paramedic, physical therapist and nurse led the counselors through a series of activities to demonstrate the skill sets necessary for their specific occupations. Counselors had the opportunity to ask the health professionals specific questions about schooling, salaries, etc.

- A CTE review of the Billings School District began in November 2015 and culminated in a School Board presentation in May 2016. The review was requested to have an outside team assess the school district’s CTE operations and instructional services. Areas of focus included CTE leadership, program development that aligned with regional workforce needs, access and equity of CTE programs, curriculum and instruction, professional development, scheduling, advisement, dual credit and work-based learning.
- The New CTE Professionals Workshop was a free professional development opportunity designed specifically for Career & Technical Education professionals in their first, second, or third year in the classroom or for those teachers new to Career & Technical Education in Montana. This professional development opportunity provided teachers who are new to the classroom, as well as those with less than four years of experience, with information on a variety of topics essential for success in the career and technical education classroom including: Perkins funding, State CTE funding, Advisory boards, Professional development, Professional organizations, Montana’s Big Sky Pathways Initiative and the Development of Programs of Study, CTE and program-area standards and guidelines, and Career & Technical Student Organizations.
- Perkins funds helped to support professional development for Montana’s business educators through three summer update workshops held in August 2016 in Billings, Simms, and Missoula. Each workshop provided opportunities for Montana business educators to gain hands-on training and instructional resources for the classroom for teaching graphic design, web design, and multimedia development with the various applications available via the Adobe Creative Cloud and Adobe Apps as well as teachers on the financial education and STEM curriculum available through EverFi’s online platform.
- It is very difficult to identify a stand-out purchase made by a secondary school using Perkins Funding. An item that may be in use in a class AA school and might be considered the “standard” mode of operation, could be totally out of reach for a smaller school without the use of Perkins Funding. A perfect example is the purchase of Plasma cutting equipment. The process (briefly) involves creating an electrical channel of superheated, electrically ionized gas (plasma), which is blown through a focused nozzle at high speed through the work piece. Plasma cutting equipment, which is currently common practice in several areas of industry, could be a stand-out addition for many high school programs. The basic technology can also be expanded to include Computer Numeric Control (CNC), 2 Axis, and 3 Axis operations.
- A Professional Development Workshop was held for Family Consumer Sciences (FCS) teachers in cooperation with Montana State University and Montana Family, Career & Community Leaders of America. This conference was offered for college credit, and it focused on linking the FCS classroom to current issues. We toured the Bozeman area textile manufacturing businesses (Simms, West Paw Design), focused on classroom inclusion of early childhood education and the implementation of farm to school curriculum.

## V. Financial Update

1. **Allocations for Secondary CTE Programs.** OPI has distributed funds on an annual basis for secondary CTE programs to LEAs according to the following formula, as determined in the Perkins Act:

- a. The total amount allocated for distribution through the local application formula for secondary education CTE is \$2,569,0478.00 for the July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017 grant cycle.
  - b. Of this amount, seventy percent of the available funds were allocated to LEAs based on the census data for school system enrollment for the number of children in poverty aged 5-17 for the previous school year.
  - c. Thirty percent of the available funds were allocated to LEAs based on the AIM enrollment data for the number of children aged 5-17 for the previous school year.
- 2. Allocations for Postsecondary CTE Programs.** The total amount allocated for distribution through the local application formula for postsecondary education CTE (other than Reserve Funds awarded through Strengthening Big Sky Pathways) for the most recent year (FY 2017) was \$1,383,565.00. Funding for postsecondary programs is determined by dividing the number of Pell grant and Bureau of Indian Affairs program recipients enrolled in the two-year postsecondary institution by the total number of Pell Grant and Bureau of Indian Affairs program recipients in the state. Each two-year postsecondary institution must qualify for at least \$50,000 before a grant is awarded.

## **VI. Conclusion**

The state of Montana continues to engage in activities made possible by the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006. Through the resources made available from the Act and state and local funding for career and technical education, Montana continues to move forward to increase career and technical education services and provide more options for students wishing to pursue postsecondary studies.